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Chair: Mr. Mero (Vice-Chair) ..... (United Republic of Tanzania)

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In the absence of Mr. Talbot (Guyana), Mr. Mero (United Republic of Tanzania), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m.

Agenda item 20: Sustainable development (*continued*) (A/67/341)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/67/206, A/67/348 and A/CONF.216/16)

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(h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*) (A/67/317)

(i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*) (A/67/175, A/67/314 and A/67/318)

1. **Ms. Kage** (Germany) said that poverty eradication, environmental protection and global governance needed to be treated together and holistically. The sustainable development goals and post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could play a key role to that end, but both processes must be coordinated closely to create a consistent and coherent set of goals. The sustainable development goals should be visionary and aim to enhance sustainable development in all countries, but they must address all three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner. Consequently, the open working group on the establishment of the sustainable development goals had a crucial task and must be promptly constituted to expedite the process.

2. Germany had long been an active partner in sustainable development and would continue to increase its commitment, including by raising relevant official development assistance (ODA) to $4.6 billion per annum by 2030 with a view to giving 100 million people access to energy. Germany was the second largest bilateral donor in water sanitation and had doubled its commitments over the preceding five years, delivering on its pledge to provide $3 billion for rural development and food security. It would at least maintain that level through to 2015.

3. **Ms. Bubanja** (Serbia) said that strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) would ensure its secure and predictable financing and enhance synergy among multilateral agreements relating to, inter alia, the environment, biodiversity and chemical and waste management. The process of establishing the sustainable development goals was likewise important and should take into account real circumstances and the many crises which had hindered sustainable development in recent years. In addition, a special intergovernmental process should be set up to draft a strategic document, with the participation of all stakeholders, on devising a global environmental protection strategy to be coordinated by UNEP on the basis of its programme of work and relevant international recommendations and conclusions. However, further financial assistance and expertise would be needed, including from the United Nations system.

4. Serbia attached great importance to sound chemicals management and sought to integrate recommendations of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and European Union standards into national regulations, with a view to reducing the threat of dangerous chemicals and finding safer alternatives. It also sought to raise awareness of such hazards via various mechanisms and events.

5. Finally, she noted that Serbia had significant and useable renewable energy sources, which it sought to exploit with a view to increasing the 21.2-per-cent share of renewable sources in its energy mix to 27 per cent. To that end, Serbia was promoting the construction of hydroelectric plants by subsidizing energy prices. It sought to make energy savings of at least 9 per cent by 2018.

6. **Ms. Alowais** (United Arab Emirates) said that her delegation welcomed the establishment of a high-level group to formulate the post-2015 development agenda. The formation of the intergovernmental open working group to develop the sustainable development goals should be expedited, and its members should be appointed on the basis of technical expertise in order to avoid politicization. The United Arab Emirates hoped to play a part in the group's work in order to help developing countries implement their national sustainable development policies, taking into consideration the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities. Developed countries must not withdraw from their commitments, particularly with regard to ODA, which were all the more important in the wake of the economic and financial crises.

7. The United Arab Emirates had made significant progress in a range of areas, including eliminating poverty, guaranteeing free education, empowering women, training youth, protecting the environment, preserving biodiversity, combating desertification, broadening the production base and moving from oil to more environmentally friendly forms of energy. In January 2012, the Government had launched a national initiative entitled "A green economy for sustainable development". Legislation had been enacted to mitigate the effects of climate change, reduce carbon emissions, raise awareness of climate change and ensure that 7 per cent of the country's energy needs came from renewable sources by 2020. The Abu Dhabi Fund for Development had allocated $350 million in facilitated loans for innovative renewable energy projects, which had been approved by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and would be enacted over the following seven years.

8. In January 2013, the city of Abu Dhabi would host the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, which would draw over 30,000 participants from 150 States with a view to discussing pressing issues regarding energy, water and the environment. Because urgent solutions were needed in to assist one billion people around the world who lacked modern sustainable sources of energy, the United Arab Emirates supported the Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All initiative and other efforts to promote safe and low-carbon energy and alternative energy sources.

9. **Mr. Kalandarov** (Tajikistan) said that his country focused on effective and rational use of natural resources and, in that regard, attached great importance to the International Year of Water Cooperation, 2013, which would raise awareness of freshwater-related problems, unify efforts among all stakeholders and contribute to achieving internationally agreed goals in water and sanitation. Consequently, adopting the resolution on the implementation of the international year of water cooperation would provide considerable support, particularly in developing follow-up measures.

10. **Mr. Šćepanović** (Montenegro) said that his country prioritized sustainable development and the green economy, particularly in the energy, agriculture and tourism sectors. Montenegro had begun transforming its energy sector in 2003 and had recently adopted a long-term strategy focusing on energy security, sustainable energy development and a competitive energy market underpinned by rational use of energy resources, environmental protection, energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. It targeted a 9-per-cent increase in energy efficiency by 2018 and a 33-per-cent share of renewable sources in its energy mix by 2020. A clear, accommodative legislative and procedural framework paved the way for the development of renewable energy sources and prompt attainment of goals, while international banks had also assisted in implementing energy efficiency measures and creating better public infrastructure.

11. With weather events increasing in intensity, Montenegro was preparing a climate mitigation and adaptation plan which would focus on energy efficiency, reducing emissions and developing the agriculture and tourism sectors, as they were most affected by climate change.

12. **Mr. Duffy** (Ireland) said that poverty, environmental sustainability and climate change required a concerted and coherent response from the international community. Environmental sustainability was critical to poverty eradication and should be given due consideration when addressing social and economic needs. Ireland looked beyond current

economic challenges to set out a resource-efficient, low-carbon and climate-resilient future in its national strategy. It had committed to implementing a green economy plan with a view to economic growth and job creation via various support mechanisms and interrelated strategies in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

13. Internationally, focus must turn to implementation of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) outcomes at all levels. Before rushing into future commitments, however, it was important to review progress on commitments such as the MDGs, which were still far from attainment, and accelerate progress where there had been shortfalls, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected States. Essential to that review was learning how the MDGs had served populations they were intended to benefit most and what those populations' priorities were. Future policy should be informed by such grass-roots consultation and expert analysis.

14. **Mr. Coulibaly** (Burkina Faso) said that Burkina Faso was particularly vulnerable to desertification, owing to its dependence on natural resources, its fragile ecosystem and its lack of infrastructure and capacity, as well as the regular droughts and famines afflicting much of the Sahel region. The situation would not change without the required financial and technological resources. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) had a key role to play, but it had yet to define a strategic international framework on sustainable land management and risked losing its credibility. However, the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Changwon in 2011, had seen a number of decisions and compromises adopted that would create favourable conditions for the implementation of the Convention.

15. Achieving a land-degradation-neutral world by 2020 would require increased international efforts and intergovernmental negotiations on an additional protocol to UNCCD on sustainable land management. Furthermore, resource mobilization was ultimately critical to implementation. The decisions regarding the financing and mandate of the Global Environment Fund must therefore be put into effect without delay in order to provide an official source of adequate, predictable and timely financing. Research, training and a stronger scientific base were also key factors and required greater exchange of knowledge and scientific cooperation. The second Scientific Conference of UNCCD, to be held in February 2013, would help in that regard.

16. Burkina Faso hoped that desertification, degradation and drought would receive due attention in the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes and post-2015 development agenda. The matter should not be viewed in isolation, but together with the promotion of peace, economic growth and development. Moreover, efforts should be led by the international community and involve cooperation among Member States.

17. **Mr. Empole** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said the implementation of the Rio+20 outcome document should be coordinated by the United Nations system, particularly in terms of defining the sustainable development goals and establishing a follow-up framework. The goals should prioritize well-being, poverty eradication and building better societies via decent work, education, stronger research and development sectors, innovation and technology. Technology transfers and greater emphasis on renewable energy sources and national strategies would help provide developing countries with access to power and modern energy sources and enhance their sustainable development and quality of life.

18. The international community must take action to halt the negative effects of climate change. Negotiations must continue in order to ensure the adoption of an adequate post-Kyoto road map and an international mechanism to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Providing technology transfers according to developing countries' needs and operationalizing the Green Climate Fund and fast-start finance were also important, but it was ultimately incumbent on States to improve living conditions through strategy and action. To that end, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was committed to preserving its forests and enhancing the many benefits they brought to the whole of humanity. It was important, however, for the international community to take the next step by finalizing and adopting an international convention on forests, and thereby engaging in a real partnership for green growth.

19. Despite increased international commitment to mitigate natural disasters, their frequency and intensity had increased. Vulnerability to such disasters differed according to level of development. Consequently, promoting international cooperation and incorporating

disaster risk management into sustainable development efforts would help to develop a post-2015 road map for disaster risk reduction. To that end, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) had adopted a regional risk reduction and disaster management strategy and a five-year programme of action on disaster preparedness and response. Nationally, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had implemented various measures, including rapid response mechanisms, intervention systems and disaster prevention units; a long-term risk reduction policy integrated into development strategies; intergovernmental cooperation with partners to modernize disaster regions; and legal and physical protection for disaster victims. Greater knowledge, technology transfers and financial assistance were required, however, as a lack of resources and capacities had impinged on the Government's ability to implement certain measures and policies.

20. **Mr. Elisaia** (Samoa) said that Samoa's impending graduation from the least-developed-country category was testimony to the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships. True partnerships, which implied shared and joint responsibility, were critical to graduation and also provided the means for sustainable development post-graduation. Consequently, the issue of partnership should be the specific focus of the 2014 Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The Conference's success should be measured by the quality and level of commitments made through lasting partnerships. Its outcome document should be brief, simple, focused, forward-looking and implementable and should promote ownership of the process by SIDS and their partners. It should contain achievable solutions through enhanced collaboration and be tailored to key vulnerabilities of SIDS.

21. **Ms. Haynes** (Trinidad and Tobago) said that any further delay in constituting the intergovernmental working group on the establishment of the sustainable development goals risked undermining the promotion of focused and coherent global action for sustainable development. Establishing the institutional framework for sustainable development was also an important step. However, States must avoid duplication and minimize overlapping, as persistent gaps and lack of coordination and coherence had stymied the implementation the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. More effective coordination between normative and operational activities was crucial.

22. The Third International Conference on SIDS and the designation of 2014 as the international year of SIDS should highlight the special needs and priorities of those nations, whose economic growth and development were inextricably linked to their inherent vulnerabilities, particularly rising sea levels. Without appropriate national and international intervention, MDG attainment efforts would be hampered and development gains might be reversed, thereby exacerbating poverty and dislocation. Extreme weather events only made matters worse and put a further strain on already limited resources. Their increasing frequency and intensity underscored the reality of climate change and the importance of meaningful corrective action. To that end, Trinidad and Tobago was implementing transformative measures in its energy sector and various renewable energy initiatives under national climate change and carbon reduction policies. However, such activities were resource- and technology-intensive and required greater support from the international community.

23. **Mr. Momenei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said sustainable development could only be achieved if efforts were based on the full integration of its three dimensions into national, regional and international policymaking. Furthermore, such development depended on effective international cooperation, capacity-building and assistance; thus, technology transfers and the full implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building should be prioritized at the highest political level.

24. Climate change was a serious, universal concern and a threat to natural resources, food security and socioeconomic infrastructure. Dust and sand storms were particularly devastating to his country and the region as a whole and required regional and global cooperation. Technical support and technology transfers, according to national strategies and priorities, would be particularly helpful in combating such storms. However, any post-Kyoto agreement should pay due attention to the issue in order to identify root causes and solutions. Low forest cover was an important contributing factor. To that end, the Islamic Republic of Iran sought to increase national forest cover from 14.3 million hectares to 16 million hectares within 10 years. However, sustainable forest

management required dedicated resources to support implementation and attain related global objectives.

25. **Ms. Metha** (International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)) said that, though it did not satisfy everyone, the Rio+20 outcome document provided a basis for continued action towards sustainable development. For its part, IUCN had discussed practical ways forward in keeping with Rio+20 and approved its programme for 2012-2016. It would be driven by a need for sustainable global production and consumption patterns, more effective and equitable governance of nature's use and enhanced utilization of nature-based solutions. The programme also sought to promote community-based biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and poverty eradication.

26. Progress in implementing the Rio+20 outcomes had been slow to date, as the proposed sustainable development goals and the formation of the open working group had been mired in intergovernmental disagreement. The IUCN hoped that work could start without further delay and provide a framework that was coherent with the MDGs and post-2015 development agenda. Since the entry into force of the Convention on Biological Diversity, progress had been made on halting biodiversity loss, but efforts needed to be scaled up to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which required strong country-level targets and the mainstreaming of biodiversity into national strategies. Biodiversity must be seen as a source of nature-based solutions to broad development challenges. In that regard, the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity had adopted a number of important decisions, such as recognizing ecologically and biologically significant marine areas, supporting the accelerated achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and acknowledging the need for far greater resources, including new resources, such as green procurement and tax schemes, and private-sector involvement. However, it was incumbent on States to implement the Rio+20 outcomes and promote greater civil society involvement in post-Rio+20 efforts.

27. **Mr. Bermeo** (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)) said that the Rio+20 Conference had not met everyone's expectations, but its long-term perspective and commitment to collaboration for change was crucial. Change depended on the strong political will of all parties to eschew political expediency and adopt decisions based on the welfare of future generations and the global community as a whole. The green economy, while rich in promise, was not in itself a panacea. With the prevailing development model underperforming, the per capita ecological footprint deteriorating and no country on course to decouple economic activity from environmental degradation, a rethink of economic foundations and growth versus well-being was required.

28. Agreeing the key principles for the sustainable development goals was an important achievement, as such goals provided a countervailing force against short-term political pressures. The goals should build on the MDGs and be integrated into a new global vision of universal sustainability. With climate change reaching the point of no return, ensuring sustainability was a challenge common to all countries and must be dealt with urgently. IPU welcomed General Assembly resolution 66/261, which called for interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and IPU, and it was determined to work with the United Nations system to help channel that contribution at national and global levels, including via the Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations. Two overarching issues were likely to arise in that context, namely, governance and development cooperation. If the sustainable development goals were to succeed, then a strong commitment to governance was required as current structures often excluded the people most concerned from discussions and decision-making.

29. Despite earlier recommendations, the Rio+20 outcome document did not provide a clear role for parliaments or parliamentarians. However, IPU hoped that the proposed high-level forum would accommodate their perspective and better integrate economic, social and environmental policies.

30. **Mr. Madiwale** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that the recent devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy underscored the need to focus on building resilience to natural disasters as part of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. All indicators currently pointed to an increase in both the incidence and the impact of natural disasters as a result of climate change, environmental degradation, urbanization and the increasing vulnerability of the world's poorest people; the consequences of such calamities constituted a profound threat to prospects for sustainable development.

31. In response, IFRC called for the accelerated implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the financing of commitments made at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, along with the full integration of disaster risk reduction and resilience-building into the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

32. Since 1980, disasters in low-income countries had accounted for just 9 per cent of disasters worldwide, yet they had resulted in nearly 50 per cent of all disaster-related fatalities. In addition, low-income countries were disproportionately vulnerable to small and medium-scale disasters, which did not attract the world's attention. Evidence suggested that the cumulative impact of small and medium-scale disasters, which were often seasonal or recurrent, was equal or greater to that caused by large-scale catastrophes, as years of development gains were often swept away overnight.

33. Successive United Nations General Assembly resolutions had recognized the links between disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, resilience-building and sustainable development. The outcome document of the Rio +20 Conference went further by explicitly calling for disaster risk reduction and resilience-building to be addressed within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

34. In order to translate those concepts into meaningful outcomes, the amount, flexibility, predictability and duration of funding for disaster risk reduction should be increased, while national and international frameworks should address and be informed by needs at the community level. Currently, disaster risk reduction funding was unacceptably low and did not reflect its importance to sustainable development. IFRC therefore called on donor countries to honour their commitments made in Geneva in 2009 to allocate 1 per cent of official development assistance to disaster risk reduction, up from the current level of 0.07 per cent.

35. The impacts of natural disasters were most often felt at the community level, and investments in resilience-building should consequently be made there by ensuring that local governments and organizations had the resources they needed and were involved in the design and implementation of national and international frameworks for disaster risk reduction. IFRC urged all stakeholders to coordinate disaster risk reduction with sustainable development in the discussions of the post-2015 development agenda, and it urged all Member States to come to an agreement on the constitution of the open working group on sustainable development goals, as further delays would restrict the consultations necessary to reach consensus.

36. **Mr. Khan** (United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)) said that tourism accounted for approximately 45 per cent of services exports by the least developed countries, and was a major economic sector for most small island developing States. As such, climate change posed a demonstrable threat to the economies of some of the world's most vulnerable countries, which themselves contributed to the problem by accounting for some 5 per cent of global CO2 emissions.

37. With tourism-related emissions predicted to increase substantially in the coming years, his organization had accorded a high priority to implementing sustainable tourism worldwide, and had likewise developed a scenario of emissions reductions in the tourism sector based on an investment of 0.2 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP), or $248 billion, between 2011 and 2050 to be spent on mitigation measures.

38. It had likewise been at the forefront of efforts to mitigate and manage the nexus between tourism and biodiversity and was cooperating with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat and other organizations on identifying critical tourism and conservation areas and supporting the integration of biodiversity planning into sustainable tourism development.

39. A number of major agreements, including the Rio+20 outcome document, had reflected a global consensus on the importance of promoting sustainable tourism as a driver of sustained and sustainable development, poverty reduction and job creation. The challenge was now to turn that consensus into policies and actions for tangible results at the national, regional and global levels.

40. His organization had responded to that challenge by providing scaled-up technical assistance and support to Member States, and by working closely with its partners within the United Nations system through the Steering Committee on Tourism and promoting its Global Code of Ethics on Tourism. In addition, the Sustainable Tourism — Eliminating Poverty

programme (ST-EP) was working to enhance energy efficiency in hotel accommodations, while an office dedicated to biodiversity and tourism was implementing projects to demonstrate the positive impact of planning and the use of tourism within the context of biodiversity, climate change and diversification.

41. **Ms. Persic** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that the Rio+20 Conference had reaffirmed the principle that universal access to quality education at all levels was essential for achieving sustainable development. In the information-based societies and economies of the contemporary world, access to knowledge and skills was critical, while education for sustainable development was bound to play a vital role in changing production and consumption habits and values, a necessary step towards achieving sustainable development.

42. The natural and social sciences were key drivers on the road to sustainable development, and particular attention should therefore be devoted to enhancing the links between science, policy and society, as well as to capacity-building and support for devising sustainable development policies. Following up on the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, the United Nations Secretary-General had implemented a Scientific Advisory Board for sustainable development under the lead of the Director-General of UNESCO, which would advise executive heads of United Nations entities on ways to strengthen the links between science, policy and society.

43. The crucial role of the oceans, freshwater and biodiversity was another important nexus reaffirmed by the Rio+20 Conference. In that context, the recently launched Oceans Compact would play an important role in implementing commitments concerning oceans, while the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services would contribute greatly to the interface between science and policy. Finally, it had been amply demonstrated that culture and creativity were essential prerequisites for sustainable development and peace, and that cultural heritage and diversity in all of its manifestations promoted social cohesion. Among other things, cultural industries generated jobs and revenues and thereby contributed to inclusive economic growth, as demonstrated by the MDG Fund for Culture and Development and the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

44. **Ms. Muedin** (United Nations International Organization for Migration (UNIOM)) said that human mobility within and between countries not only was shaped by a range of diverse economic, social and political interrelations, but also, in turn, exercised a strong influence on them. Migration was therefore an important aspect of the sustainable development equation, and her organization had addressed a number of issues associated with that relationship.

45. In keeping with the conclusions of the Secretary-General's report entitled "Concrete recommendations to enhance the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy" (A/66/278), her organization fully endorsed the principle that a healthy environment was essential to livelihoods and food security. The absence of a healthy environment threatened the ability of populations to sustain themselves, while land degradation contributed to hunger and was a significant factor driving migration.

46. The impact of climate change on small island developing countries was of particular concern, not only because of its impact on marine protected areas and the livelihoods associated with them, but also in terms of the very survival of those countries. Her organization believed that the movement of people resulting from climate change should be met with targeted responses, while bearing in mind that some people were too impoverished to move on their own. While local authorities and national Governments were ordinarily best placed to render assistance, in certain circumstances they did not possess the means to do so, in which case the international community should be prepared to provide support.

47. On a related point, disaster risk reduction, including prevention and preparation, played an important role in protecting communities from harm. While many countries had made good progress in enhancing their disaster preparedness, response and early warning mechanisms, a number of gaps remained. Building resilient societies called for a comprehensive approach that factored disaster risk into investment and development decisions; in addition, however, migration, both internal and international, should be taken into account in the risk mitigation and response processes.

48. Rural to urban migration was a key driver of increased urbanization, for instance, and without adequate planning it could increase disaster risks from earthquakes, droughts and floods. For that reason her organization welcomed the attention devoted in the Secretary-General's report to incorporating climate change, environmental degradation, urbanization and population growth into national disaster risk reduction plans. At the same time, mainstreaming migration into such adaptation strategies was critical in order to minimize forced relocations. She therefore urged all Member States to integrate the issue of migration into the discussions of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, in order to achieve a fully inclusive future for all.

Agenda item 17: Information and communications technologies for development (A/67/65-E/2012/48, A/67/65/Corr.1-E/2012/48/Corr.1, A/67/66-E/2012/49, A/67/66/Add.1-E/2012/49/Add.1 and A/67/207)

49. **Mr. Hamdi** (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) at the regional and international levels" (A/67/66-E/2012/49), said that since the second phase of WSIS in 2005 remarkable achievements had been realized in building the information and knowledge society. Information and communications technologies and related services were changing faster than any technology or market in history, and they were exerting a profound influence on a number of public policy domains, including the economy, society, governance, culture, the environment and human rights.

50. Global exports of information and communications technologies now accounted for as much as one fifth of the merchandise traded in developing countries, and there were already nearly 6 billion mobile cellular subscriptions globally. Africa was the fastest-growing mobile market and the biggest after Asia, with the number of subscribers growing at 20 per cent for the past five years. Likewise, the number of Internet users had doubled since 2005, and now totalled 2.3 billion.

51. However, there was justifiable concern that a digital divide was emerging between the developed and developing worlds, as illustrated by the fact that mobile broadband penetration was just 3 per cent in Africa compared to over 90 per cent in the Republic of Korea. Disparities were likewise evident in terms of cost, whereby entry-level broadband connections in most developed countries constituted just 1 per cent of gross national income per capita, but were considerably higher in developing countries. Additional constraints on the development of an information society included a lack of affordable infrastructure such as electricity, human skills and enabling institutional and legal frameworks.

52. Considerable progress had been made in 2011 towards the implementation of the outcomes of WSIS, and United Nations and international agencies were now preparing for the 10-year review of those outcomes in 2014. As stakeholders prepared for the upcoming review, it was necessary to gain a better understanding of the changing nature of the information society and to formulate adaptive policy responses. At the same time, the indicators used to measure progress towards the information society should be further studied, taking into account the rapid changes in information and communications technologies and their use around the world.

53. **Ms. Bilello** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)), introducing the Secretary-General's report entitled "Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system" (A/67/207), said that traditional media were increasingly converging with new information and communications technologies, creating a reality rich with possibilities but uneven in its evolution. Both new and old technologies were crucial enablers of change, but a proper understanding of the broader implications of freedom of expression was necessary in order to plan their effective use for the empowerment of poor people to contribute to public agendas.

54. UNESCO had been entrusted with facilitating the free flow of information in order to bridge knowledge differences, foster dialogue and promote the social inclusion of the marginalized and the poor. Along with other United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, it shared the view that communication for development at the United Nations was about strengthening the effectiveness of the United Nations system by reinforcing core principles to foster and maintain economic, social and cultural development and peace. From that perspective, it was evident that enabled media environments were needed to underpin

communication for development; such environments could then expedite social participation in the interest of fostering economic and social development, as well as democracy.

55. To that end, it was necessary to promote an environment in which freedom of expression, together with the independence and pluralism of the media, could exist. In the absence of those preconditions, societies could not advance more specific practices, such as health and agricultural communication, to optimal effect. Moreover, it was critical that the news, in particular, reflected the world in a way that went deeper than a male-centric and stereotypical perspective; UNESCO had therefore produced a set of Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media to facilitate standards of equality between women and men working in the media.

56. Media and information literacy equipped citizens with the competence required to assess the relevance and reliability of the information they received, and as such the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers had been well received by numerous stakeholders. Access to new information and communications technologies could be equitable, sustainable and people-centred only if it was accompanied by efficient strategies to address both professional and institutional capacity-building.

57. To that end, a number of inter-agency collaborative efforts had been initiated with the aim of enhancing freedom of expression, including the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS), which had co-developed the WSIS Review Action Plan. Together, such initiatives would move forward the work of building the information society and ensure that access to new information and communications technologies was equitable and inclusive.

58. **Mr. Djacta** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the importance of information and communications technologies to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals and the promotion of inclusive growth could not be underestimated. However, while there had been significant advances in new technologies, for most of the world's poor the developmental promise of science and technology remained unfulfilled. Creating links between knowledge generation and development was therefore one of the greatest challenges facing the developing countries.

59. The ongoing financial and economic crisis had not only affected the ability of developing countries to mobilize resources for development, but had impacted the pace at which information and communications technologies were being disseminated. WSIS had been held in order to address the challenges posed by the growing digital divide between the developed and developing worlds, and the Group of 77 and China attached great importance to the full and effective implementation of the outcomes of both the Geneva and Tunis phases of the Summit, including the provision on governance.

60. He further underlined the importance of allowing all Governments to have an equal role and responsibility for international Internet governance and for ensuring the stability, security and continuity of the Internet, in keeping with paragraph 69 of the Tunis Agenda.

61. Finally, he reaffirmed the role of the United Nations General Assembly in the overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes, and called for the holding of such a review, in accordance with paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda, in 2015.

62. **Mr. Charles** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the Community had long recognized the potential of information and communications technologies to act as catalysts for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. A number of countries in the region, including his own, had begun to tailor national development strategies to achieve sustainable and inclusive development through a focus on innovation and creativity. The transformative value of information and communications technologies in small, vulnerable economies was beyond dispute, as they acted as key enablers of their development efforts.

63. CARICOM countries were actively involved at the national, subregional and regional levels in initiatives focused on the development of the information and communications sector through the implementation of WSIS outcomes. They had embarked on the development of a Regional Digital Development Strategy, were participating in the e-Latin America and Caribbean Initiative, and were part of the Commonwealth Connects Programme

seeking to harness the potential of new technologies to support sustainable development objectives. The region had likewise been involved in the International Telecommunications Union (ITU)/European Commission (EC) joint project entitled "Enhancing competitiveness in the Caribbean through the harmonization of information and communications policies, legislation and regulatory procedures".

64. Although a great deal of progress had been achieved, a number of challenges continued to hamper regional efforts to implement the outcomes of WSIS, including insufficient resources, fragmentation and lack of coordination. CARICOM therefore called on the international community to enhance its support for the development of the information and communications sector through strengthened partnerships, increased technology transfers and capacity-building tailored to meet the particular needs of small societies.

65. In addition, as the Internet was now widely recognized as a foundational element in the development of an information society, the issue of Internet governance and its economic, social and cultural implications had become extremely relevant. In that context, CARICOM believed that Internet governance should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, and should involve the full participation of developing countries.

66. Finally, the WSIS review should receive a high level of political commitment from all Governments, given the far-reaching implications of its outcomes for the future of cooperation on information and communications technologies for development.

67. **Ms. Ibrahim** (Brunei Darussalam), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that given the importance of information and communications technologies for sustainable and inclusive development, there was growing concern with regard to the emerging digital divide between the developed and developing worlds. In addition, the continuing uncertainty of the global economic and financial situation had discouraged potential investors from making much-needed investments in the information and communications industries of developing countries. It was therefore crucial that Member States, as well as the private sector, should work together to increase the integrity and reliability of telecommunications networks and to improve the security and resilience of the information and communications technology infrastructure.

68. More than 10 years had passed since ASEAN began cooperating in the information and communications technology sector, and significant results had been achieved. Technological advances had been incorporated in a wide variety of sectors, including health, education, commerce and governance, and more than 78 per cent of the citizens of ASEAN now depended on information and communications technologies. More than 11.7 million people were employed in the sector, contributing more than $32 billion to the economy annually. In addition, at least five ASEAN countries had achieved 100 per cent mobile penetration.

69. Furthermore, ASEAN had begun analysing strategies to stimulate broadband adoption, with the eventual goal of creating an environment conducive to e-business, e-commerce, venture capital and talent promotion. It was also looking into strengthening cooperation in telecommunications regulations in order to facilitate the development of the telecommunications industry and to further promote collaboration in regulatory practices, policy strategies and coordination of standards.

70. Through such initiatives, ASEAN hoped to establish information and communications technologies as an engine of growth for its member States, and to develop the region as a telecommunications and information hub. Because the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies played a vital role in promoting and expanding the information and communications sector, ASEAN reaffirmed its commitment and support for the work of the Second Committee in coming up with an effective and sustainable response to the challenges and opportunities of the coming information society.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

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Chair: Mr. Mero (Vice-Chair) ..... (United Republic of Tanzania)

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In the absence of Mr. Talbot (Guyana), Mr. Mero (United Republic of Tanzania), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 17: Information and communication technologies for development (*continued*) (A/67/65/Corr.1-E/2012/48/Corr.1, A/67/66-E/2012/49, A/67/66/Add.1-E/2012/49/Add.1 and A/67/207)

1. **Mr. Morozov** (Russian Federation) said that since 2011, the Russian Federation had implemented a number of specialized information systems to ensure the effective use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) at all levels of society, including a fully operative system of e-Government. As one of the founders of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), his country applauded the discussion on internationalizing Internet governance with the Union's guidance and oversight. The upcoming World Conference on International Telecommunications would provide the opportunity to consider revising the International Telecommunication Regulations.

2. It was important to strengthen the role of ITU in shaping future communication networks with an emphasis on developing testing mechanisms for new technologies, protocols and communication services. The Union should also be recognized as the leading expert in testing for compliance and compatibility and developing global standards as a basis for the establishment of national technical regulations.

3. Additional measures to improve coordination between the Union and its members included revising the procedure for the participation of regional telecommunications organizations as observers in the ITU Council, providing free online access to the recently revised ITU Radio Regulations and improving the Union's internal management and governance by enhancing the effectiveness of the Independent Advisory Committee on Management (IMAC).

4. **Mr. Lakhal** (Tunisia) recalled that some recent developments, such as the rapid development of the mobile Internet and the exceptionally rapid growth of social networking, had not been generally anticipated at the time of the World Summit on the Information Society. Although the mobile revolution had narrowed the digital divide in one respect, disparities in broadband access between developed and developing countries remained and while broadband was critical for advancing development, many countries lacked the infrastructure, finance and human skills to take full advantage of ICTs. Furthermore, the increasing threat of cybercrime and content piracy, particularly in developing countries, required enhanced cooperation, technical assistance and capacity-building to prevent the use of information technologies for criminal purposes.

5. He stressed the importance of implementing the outcome documents of the Geneva and Tunis phases of the World Summit and the recommendations of the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum, in particular by broadening the participation and capacity-building of developing countries and under-represented stakeholders and ensuring the long-term predictability and stability of funding for the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and its activities.

6. At the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) meeting on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, held in Geneva on 18 May 2012, the participants had considered it urgent to initiate and reinforce a transparent, democratic and multilateral process that would give Governments an important role in Internet governance within the multi-stakeholder framework established by the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society. His delegation therefore called for the establishment of an intergovernmental mechanism for enhanced cooperation, within the framework of the United Nations, that would place Governments on an equal footing and give them a role in matters relating to public policy on the Internet.

7. His delegation reaffirmed the role of the General Assembly in the Open Consultation Process on Overall Review of the Implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society Outcomes (WSIS-10), to be held by the end of 2015 as requested in paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda, and supported the holding of a high-level review conference for that purpose. The conference should also address the new opportunities and challenges presented by technological and market changes and the major challenges to States, and particularly developing States.

8. **Ms. Assaf** (Brazil) recalled that at the June 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the participants had considered

it essential to work towards improved access to ICTs and to bridge the digital divide, with international cooperation playing a vital role in the pursuit of those goals. The United Nations should play a pivotal role in harnessing the full potential of ICTs as tools for development, as envisaged in the Geneva Declaration of Principles, and addressing the lack of effective financial mechanisms aimed at eliminating the digital divide.

9. Most poor populations had yet to benefit from the extraordinary growth in ICTs in recent years. In order to build an open, inclusive, diverse and reliable information society, it was critical to democratize Internet governance; only through enhanced global coordination would the Internet remain free and secure for all. He urged all stakeholders to engage constructively in the debate on that issue. As no consensus had been reached at the 18 May 2012 CSTD meeting on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, the Commission's mandate to continue discussion of the launching of an enhanced cooperation process, preferably by creating a multi-stakeholder working group, should be renewed. Universal access was a guiding principle of his Government's Internet governance policy and an essential tool for human and social development. It was important to ensure that ICTs became an effective tool for reducing social and economic inequality.

10. **Ms. Melnikovich** (Belarus) said that ICTs represented one of the modern world's most dynamic sectors, whose comprehensive integration into the social and economic spheres had dramatically raised global living standards and facilitated attainment of the internationally agreed development goals. In particular, they had played a key role in establishing the new social and economic infrastructure that was vital to the achievement of sustainable development by qualitatively improving information exchange. The United Nations, by virtue of its universality and moral authority, continued to play a key role in promoting international cooperation with a view to transforming the sector's potential into a genuine force for development. One of the Organization's leading tasks was to provide advisory and technical assistance to Member States with the aim of implementing e-Government and to promote technology transfer in order to improve the competitiveness of developing countries, including those in the middle-income category.

11. The development of information and communications technologies was one of her Government's top priorities and, to that end, it had implemented a national communications strategy in order to match the most advanced European countries by 2015. In addition, a national programme had been inaugurated in order to accelerate the development of ICTs in the areas of governance, health, education and human resources.

12. It was vital that international and legal norms should be established in order to protect consumers from threats such as Internet piracy, phishing, cyberterrorism, cyberattacks and other threats, as well as to establish universally accepted norms of behaviour in cyberspace. A highly developed and accessible information and communications sector was an essential precondition for equitable and inclusive economic growth, not only of developed countries but of the middle-income countries where more than two-thirds of the world's poor resided.

13. **Mr. Haniff** (Malaysia) said that, since the creation of its Multimedia Super Corridor in 1996, Malaysia had taken a number of steps to integrate new communications technologies into its development agenda. The National Broadband Initiative of 2010 and Digital Malaysia, launched in 2011, would help to create an affordable, universally accessible digital ecosystem that would increase gross national income (GNI), enhance productivity and raise the population's standard of living.

14. The goal of the Digital Malaysia initiative was to redefine Malaysia as a country of demand and production rather than supply and consumption and to move its work force from low- to high-skilled. Malaysia had launched a number of initiatives to boost digital services and build capacities, including in the banking, consumer, education and financial sectors. At the international level, the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme had played an active role in South-South cooperation, sharing ICT expertise with over 141 developing countries since 1981.

15. Development was not only about increasing the number of mobile devices or broadband users; the strategic thrust of ICT initiatives should be to help countries achieve tangible improvements in the living standards their people. The Committee should endeavour to find more ways for ICTs to accelerate the

economic development of Member States, especially in the developing world.

16. **Mr. Elshaar** (Egypt) said that ICTs were crucial in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to the World Bank, a 10 per cent increase in broadband penetration would raise the average growth rate of gross domestic product (GDP) by 1.2 per cent in high income countries and 1.4 per cent in low-middle-income countries. As noted in the Rio+20 outcome document, The future we want, greater effort should be made to bridge the gap in broadband access and affordability, especially in the developing and least developed countries.

17. His delegation attached great importance to the principles established at the World Summit on the Information Society, including multilateral, transparent and democratic Internet governance, equitable distribution of resources and access for all. Since the primary objective of the Tunis Agenda had not been met, his delegation supported the proposal to establish a working group on enhanced cooperation under the aegis of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. It also called for the establishment of an intergovernmental preparatory committee to set the agenda and prepare a draft outcome document for WSIS+10.

18. **Mr. Al Seedi** (Iraq) said that his Government had adopted a holistic approach to Internet development and had implemented a number of measures, including the adoption of legislation on electronic signatures and transactions and expansion of the use of ICTs. With a view to narrowing the digital divide, it had established a capacity-building programme that had trained 6,000 people, an interactive Government gateway and a communications framework connecting the Government with local and national institutions in the areas of health, education and information services.

19. His Government had also provided support for the private sector and was promoting the use of mobile networks and broadband, including in the postal system. It was preparing to host an international conference on the theme "Together towards Digital Inclusion", to be held in Baghdad on 2 and 3 December 2012, with the aim of ensuring that advances in ICT served the country's overall development goals.

20. **Mr. Monthienvichienchai** (Thailand) said that vast improvements in usability, scalability and affordability had made ICTs an important tool for development. His Government had introduced a number of ICT initiatives, including the Government Information Network, which reduced overhead costs and streamlined delivery of Government services, and projects in the areas of telemedicine and telecare. His country was bridging the digital divide by offering free public WiFi and distributing free tablet computers in schools. ICTs also played a crucial role in the advancement of small and medium-sized enterprises and in trade facilitation. Given the rapid pace of technological development, it was important for policies to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate unanticipated change, such as the leap forward in rural development that his country had experienced, through improved access to mobile communications.

21. The potential of technology to transform development should be kept in mind in collecting baseline data with a view to the formulation of sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda and in assessing results. Crowdsourcing was another way to broaden public participation in solving problems at the global, national and community levels.

22. With the increase in online transactions, new challenges, such as cybersecurity and Internet governance, demanded the involvement of all stakeholders to achieve an acceptable balance between regulatory measures and freedom. His delegation supported the role of the IGF in that regard.

23. **Mr. Dhanapala** (Sri Lanka) said that his Government had implemented a number of programmes as part of its ICT strategy; its e-Sri Lanka programme had delivered improvements in the economic, development and social spheres. It had also launched grassroots initiatives to strengthen information management in the areas of governance, education, health care and in the industrial, agricultural, fishery, social security and judicial sectors and had built a rural telecentre network that promoted partnerships among Government, the private sector, individual entrepreneurs and civil society. A similar island-wide network, operated by the Ministry of Technology and Research, was expanding access to scientific and technological applications into rural areas with content in local languages. The Ministry for Information and Communication Technology, established in 2010, encouraged competition among providers in implementing an island-wide broadband backbone aimed at narrowing the digital divide.

24. In that connection, he commended the United Nations Public Service Awards Programme, which encouraged innovative e-Government applications worldwide. His Government's administrative reform policy recognized e-Government as the key to the State's public sector reform agenda owing to its focus on giving citizens access to many Government and e-business services. As a result of Government investments, Sri Lanka's ICT literacy rate had risen from 5 per cent in 2004 to almost 40 per cent in 2012, with a goal of 75 per cent by 2015, and mobile phone penetration was above 100 per cent.

25. Bridging the divide between rural and urban communities had multiple short- and long-term benefits, from helping to curb unwanted migration patterns to reducing the need for costly visits to urban centres. ICTs also served young people by offering a platform for distance education and innovative employment creation, including ICT-based green jobs and small-scale business process outsourcing companies. Moreover, ICTs themselves were a growth sector and had become the fifth largest source of national revenue and there were plans to make it the largest such source by 2015.

26. Having taken the lead in harmonizing its national legislation with existing international codes on Internet management and governance, his Government believed that the efficiency of existing platforms should be maximized before new standards for international Internet governance were introduced. The State's statutes in those areas were often used as best practice cases in global forums and its President aimed to make the country a knowledge hub in the region. Sri Lanka had recently been elected to a third term as Chair of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Committee on Information and Communications Technology.

27. **Ms. Saban** (United States of America) said that distributed systems such as the Internet required distributed action; no single institution, document, arrangement or instrument could address the needs of a networked world. She therefore welcomed the May 2012 meeting of the CSTD meeting on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and recalled that the Tunis Agenda had requested the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission, to continue to play a coordinating role in follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society through a multi-stakeholder approach. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and ITU had already adopted parallel resolutions with a view to hosting the World Summit review meetings using extra-budgetary funds; her delegation hoped that all other relevant United Nations agencies would conduct similar reviews in accordance with their different mandates and competencies and would report on their findings to the Council in writing by February 2015.

28. **Mr. Aliyev** (Azerbaijan) said that large capital investments were required to build the high quality telecommunications infrastructure that would lead to full digital inclusion, which had the potential to boost the Internet value chain's overall contribution to the GDP of national economies. Regional solutions could enable countries to reduce costs, improve services and achieve economies of scale by leveraging existing assets and sharing investment risks. The Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway, for which Azerbaijan served as implementation coordinator, played an important role in bridging the digital divide and had been recognized in General Assembly resolution 64/186.

29. The Government viewed ICTs as a means of empowering citizens. Azerbaijan had one of the world's highest number of mobile phone users and its Internet prices had fallen by 35 per cent as a result of expanded competition. One State and two private networks connected all regional centres and 35 per cent of villages with a high speed single network, and the goal was to make such services available in all rural areas. His country had been the first in its region to fully digitize its fixed telephone system with a capacity of 18.6 per cent for every 100 people. E-signatures and e-Government had been introduced in 2011.

30. Over the next 10 years, the Government planned to invest 3.5 billion dollars in ICT projects and expected the private sector to do so as well. To that end, it was further improving the State's economic environment through enabling fiscal and monetary tools. That support had made Azerbaijan the region's leading country in ICT initiatives. At the regional level, it continued to promote experience- and knowledge-sharing between Governments, industry leaders, academics and civil society. From 6 to 9 November 2012, it had hosted simultaneously, in Baku, the eighteenth Azerbaijan International Exhibition and Conference on the theme "Telecommunications and

Information Technologies" (Bakutel) and the seventh IGF.

31. **Mr. Xie** Xiaowu (China) said that the number of Chinese Internet users had reached 538 million. There were 270 million users of weibo, the Chinese equivalent of Twitter, and China held third place worldwide in number of Internet Protocol Version 6 (Ipv6) addresses. However, China still faced a digital divide among its regions and was accelerating research and development on the next generation of ICTs, including broadband; in that connection, he called on the international community to support efforts to develop new transnational ICT infrastructures.

32. Owing to its huge market demand, population dividend and late-comer advantage, China enjoyed a large comparative edge that would soon be shared by many developing countries. However, some States had recently blocked the use of Chinese products, contravening market rules and international trade norms and restricting the role of ICTs in promoting development. In the long run, such practices would hurt all concerned.

33. In order to ensure the effective role of ICTs in promoting development worldwide, there should be a rational layout of Internet root servers and they should be strategically deployed to improve disaster preparedness. The international community should support the building of regional and transnational ICT infrastructures as a means of narrowing the digital divide and, given the often-transboundary nature of information and communications, it should facilitate the smooth development and provision of ICTs and related products and services at the international level

34. **Mr. Holtz** (United Kingdom) commended the Government of Azerbaijan on its successful hosting of the seventh Internet Governance Forum. His delegation also welcomed the CSTD meeting on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and supported the proposal to hold further deliberations on the issue, perhaps within the framework of a dedicated working group. In pursuing that idea, it was important to ensure the strong voice and representation of all stakeholders and clear involvement by the wider membership of the Economic and Social Council.

35. A comprehensive mapping of current cooperation initiatives at the regional and international levels would help to assess their impact; reveal potential synergies that could be leveraged for greater impact, particularly in developing countries; expose critical issues that could benefit from multi-stakeholder mechanisms involving Governments; and identify guiding principles and best practices for effective cooperation among Governments, intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholder communities.

36. He reiterated his delegation's concern that the post of Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Internet Governance remained vacant, despite the expressed interest of qualified candidates, and called for it to be filled quickly. With WSIS+10 on the horizon, it was more important than ever for the Secretary-General to receive quality advice and support in order to mobilize the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders in preparation for that review.

37. **Mr. Weisleder** (Costa Rica) said that, like many countries, Costa Rica faced various internal and external challenge. His Government believed that national development required solid economic policies, a sustainable environment model and an effective wealth distribution strategy and was working to ensure that the needs of its people were met in the areas of housing, health, food, education, safety and human rights. The Government viewed ICTs as an integral part of development and had undertaken to incorporate them into 85 per cent of the country's public schools.

38. However, there was still a digital divide between rural and urban areas, between different levels of education and income and between adults and youth, owing in part to the cost of technology. In recent years, collaboration between the public and private sectors had gone a long way towards narrowing that gap. Twenty-four per cent of the population had Internet access, small and medium-sized businesses accounted for 90 per cent of the software produced in Costa Rica and software accounted for 6 per cent of the country's total exports.

39. His country was pleased to have been chosen by ITU to host the first World Conference on Youth and ICT, to be held in September 2013, which would cover such topical issues as the Child Online Protection initiative, education, work, health, digital responsibility, access to technology and gender, all from the perspective of youth. Backed by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Entity

for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNESCO, among others, the Conference would encourage decision-makers and other stakeholders to make digital security, access and innovation a priority in setting national policy.

40. **Mr. Ringborg** (Sweden) said that Human Rights Council resolution 20/8 on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet, adopted on 5 July 2012, was a milestone document and reflected the importance of ICTs as a tool for the promotion and exercise of human rights; it affirmed that the same rights that people had offline must also be protected online and recognized the global and open nature of the Internet as a driving force in accelerating progress towards development in its various forms. The challenge was to find a balance in the global Internet governance structures that took full account of the interests of all stakeholders worldwide. Full multi-stakeholder participation through the IGF had a vital role to play in facilitating international cooperation with regard to Internet governance and bringing together issues that hitherto had often been discussed in separate arenas.

41. **Ms. Bubanja** (Serbia) said that, even when commodities were well distributed, services provided and systems strengthened, many people lacked the skills and confidence to make informed decisions on issues that affected their own lives and those of their children and to engage in dialogue with decision-makers and other citizens. ICTs were the key to economic and social progress, yet Member States had made little response to the notes by the Secretary-General on communication for development programmes in the United Nations system, the most recent of which was document A/67/207.

42. Her Government supported participatory, consultative communication via radio, the Internet and other platforms and would work with other Member States to promote communication for development, including by developing policies for multi-stakeholder, development-oriented dialogue. Twenty-six per cent of the population in developing countries used the Internet, as opposed to 74 per cent in developed countries. Closing that gap was critical to achievement of the MDGs and her delegation supported initiatives aimed at improving access to information technology for marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, girls and women, indigenous minorities and remote and vulnerable populations.

43. **Ms. Ben Dor** (Israel) said that it was not enough to help developing countries to acquire new technologies; the focus should be on capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and skills transfer. The Internet was a catalyst that could improve lives, address global problems, provide access to market information, strengthen democracy, promote sustainable development and influence politics. In 2011, ICTs had also played a central role in political transformation. Full access was vital if developing countries were to participate in the global economy and reap the benefits of globalization. WSIS+10 would provide an opportunity to deal with key issues: closing the digital divide between developing and developed countries, using real-time data, increasing developing countries' online presence and integrating ICT issues into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.

44. E-governance had helped Israel to revitalize its public administration, foster inclusive leadership and increase the efficiency, transparency and accountability of its civil service. Her country was leading the way in online Government services and, in the United Nations E-Government Survey 2012, had been listed as one of three recipients of an award for outstanding progress in that area. However, it had faced increasing numbers of cyberattacks in 2012 and had therefore established a national cybercommission that was responsible both for sharing aspects of Israel's Internet experience and expertise and for homeland security in the face of cyberthreats.

45. **Mr. Khadka** (Nepal) said that in his country, 31 per cent of the population had telephones and access to ICTs was growing. Generally speaking, however, the developing countries were being increasingly marginalized by the digital divide. His Government attached great importance to that issue, particularly in light of Nepal's difficult and diverse terrain, and was expanding education in ICTs and establishing rural information centres. It was urgent for the nation's development partners to make additional commitments to technology transfer and resource mobilization so that Nepal could acquire ICTs as a tool for sustainable development. North-South dialogue and South-South and triangular cooperation were also needed in order to add momentum to the process.

46. His delegation called for implementation of the Tunis Agenda and for the smooth transfer of ICTs and related technologies and infrastructure. Communication technologies needed to be affordable if they were to support development and if a truly international information society was to be achieved. The United Nations system should ensure inter-agency coordination, including at the country level, and, in conjunction with development partners and the international community, should focus on the development and implementation of fair, just, inclusive, pro-poor and people-centric ICT policies in order to narrow the digital divide

47. **Mr. Jaiswal** (India) said that the Internet had evolved into a powerful, ubiquitous and empowering medium with vast potential to foster sustainable and inclusive development. His delegation was committed to its free growth and to the vision, set out in the Tunis Agenda, of multilateral, transparent and democratic Internet governance with the full involvement of Governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations. An appropriate Internet governance system must be flexible, representative and able to keep pace with the ever-changing nature of the Internet and must take regional and national differences and sensitivities into consideration. It must also incorporate a mechanism to deliver justice for cybercrimes in real time without being limited by political boundaries.

48. His delegation hoped that the adoption of the Committee's resolution under the agenda item would enhance cooperation on Internet policy issues in line with the Tunis Agenda and urged Member States to support the establishment of a CSTD working group on enhanced cooperation with multi-stakeholder participation.

49. **Mr. Fowlie** (International Telecommunication Union) provided an update on preparations for WSIS+10. Although ICTs had developed rapidly and 90 per cent of the world's people were within reach of a mobile telephone, two-thirds of the global population was still offline. ICTs had yet to fulfill their potential as a catalyst for all the sustainable development goals, including in the areas of health, education, gender equality, human rights and governance. In the run-up to the high-level event to be held in 2014 or 2015 as part of the review process, ITU had held discussions with international stakeholders, at which three principles had emerged. First, the preparatory process needed to be light and outcome-oriented and to build on existing mechanisms and platforms; second, the outcome of WSIS+10 must be a reference point for the next decade, keeping ICTs on the agendas of Member States as a catalyst for sustainable development; and, lastly, the multi-stakeholder approach to the overall review needed to be preserved and strengthened.

50. Two upcoming events would also strengthen that approach: a UNESCO meeting on the theme "Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development", to be held in Paris on February 2013; and an ITU high-level event on the overall review of WSIS+10, to be held in 2014, which would shape a vision for a sustainable, knowledge-based information society beyond 2015. At the World Summit on the Information Society, countries and international organizations had been asked to develop indicators and produce official statistics to monitor the information society. The Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development was a Tunis-based global, multi-stakeholder initiative that was designed to improve the quality of ICT data and indicators, particularly in developing countries. Also noteworthy was the first country-by-country review of broadband deployment, released in September 2012 by the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development, together with a series of case studies that highlighted the importance of broadband networks to economic and social development and illustrated their role in achievement of the MDGs and the sustainable development goals.

51. ITU had launched a global campaign to address the gender divide in the information society. The Tech Needs Girls competition aimed to spark girls' creativity, particularly in the developing world, and inspire them to embrace technology and its career potential.

52. **Ms. Claycomb** (United Nations Children's Fund) said that when communities were active participants in development, change was more likely to occur and to be sustainable. Communication for development, which was empowering and critical to sustainable development, had played an integral role in development efforts over the past five decades. At country level, a network of UNICEF specialists collaborated with governmental and non-governmental partners, including other United Nations agencies. Recent ICT projects in India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Cambodia had improved health care during

pregnancy and child vaccination rates and increased knowledge about HIV transmission while in Montenegro, a multi-stakeholder campaign using communication for development had raised awareness about disability.

Agenda item 24: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*) (A/67/228)

(a) Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) (*continued*) (A/67/180)

(b) Industrial development cooperation (*continued*) (A/67/223)

53. **Mr. Gaspard** (Haiti) said that poverty affected everyone; it caused social violence, which damaged countries' economic and social development. Stimulating farming and decreasing vulnerability to the effects of natural disasters were significant challenges to poverty eradication for developing countries. The elimination of extreme poverty required a genuinely integrated policy encompassing the economic, social, agricultural and environmental dimensions of development. His delegation was encouraged by the fact that the goal of halving extreme poverty had been reached five years before the target date.

54. From 6 to 9 November 2012, his Government had organized a symposium on combating extreme poverty, in which all national and international stakeholders had participated. The symposium had examined ways of reducing the rate of extreme poverty in Haiti from 51.1 per cent to 40 per cent by 2016 and had recognized the importance of job creation. Employment was one of his Government's five priorities in its effort to reduce extreme poverty and a number of macroeconomic reforms had been adopted. Those efforts were beginning to bear fruit: the number of small businesses was increasing and one of the Caribbean's largest industrial parks had opened in 2011, providing 80,000 jobs. A universal social safety net was also important to poverty eradication; his Government had recently launched various pilot schemes against hunger and extreme poverty. His delegation welcomed the ILO Social Protection Floor initiative, introduced in 2009, and the success of Latin American countries in its implementation.

55. **Ms. Maluke** (Lesotho) said that unemployment had become a global threat to development and seriously compromised the macroeconomic stability of developing countries. Poverty, which undermined human dignity, was concentrated in the regions that were home to most of the least developed countries: Southern Africa and South Asia. In his own region, over 80 per cent of workers were in vulnerable employment, lacking resilience to economic shocks and other social and economic challenges, and excessive food price volatility further reduced access to essential social services; in fact, there had been a net loss of gains in efforts to achieve the health-related MDGs. The Global Jobs Pact was a useful framework that could stimulate job growth by helping countries design policies specific to their national situations. It was vital to support training and other programmes in the public, agricultural, financial and rural sectors, including micro-financing for small-hold farmers and small and medium-sized enterprises, and to invest in rural development.

56. But efforts to eradicate poverty would be in vain unless they addressed the needs of the most vulnerable. Gender disparity in the labour market meant that women suffered disproportionately from decent work deficits and were forced to work in the informal sector. Rising youth unemployment was equally disturbing and could lead to increased criminality. His delegation therefore supported the Secretary-General's proposal to appoint a Special Advisor on Youth as part of his five-year action plan and called on the international community to honour its official development assistance (ODA) commitments in order to relieve small economies from the stigma of poverty.

57. **Ms. Barth** (International Labour Organization) urged the United Nations system, Member States, civil society and other stakeholders to enhance their efforts to promote the ILO Decent Work Agenda, which remained the best framework for poverty eradication. In light of the still-dismal global employment trends, including wage suppression and the escalating number of jobless and underemployed youth, the world risked losing an entire generation. In that context, the quality of jobs was as important as their quantity.

58. The ILO Call for Action on the Youth Employment Crisis, adopted in Geneva in June 2012 by Governments, employers and workers at the one hundred and first session of the International Labour Conference, was a major roadmap with specific guidelines and a policy portfolio of concrete measures to address the job crisis, including by correcting skills mismatches, improving apprenticeship systems and

promoting youth entrepreneurship through partnerships that enabled people to build sustainable livelihoods. At that session of the Conference, the participants had also adopted recommendation 202 on social protection floors, a landmark international labour standard that called for providing people with essential health care, social services and basic income security.

59. Agriculture remained the mainstay of most rural economies, accounting for more than 1 billion workers in 2009. Job creation in that sector would therefore be a critical engine for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

60. The primary asset of women and men living in poverty was their labour. ILO would continue to work across the spectrum of stakeholders to support the Decent Work Agenda as a means of eliminating the root causes of poverty through pro-poor, job-centred economic development and ensuring that the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty achieved its goal.

61. **Mr. Chullikatt** (Observer for the Holy See) recalled that as early as the 1960s, Pope Paul VI had called for the creation of an inclusive market economy in his encyclical on the development of peoples. Pope Benedict XVI, in his encyclical on charity in truth, had expanded the idea of equitable growth to include responsible stewardship over nature, which was essential to any strategy for sustainable development, and called for worldwide redistribution of energy resources.

62. Goal 1 of the MDGs (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) would be difficult to achieve worldwide by 2015, but it was important to learn from countries whose strategies had been successful. Reviving economic growth was an essential first step, but it was also important to adopt pro-poor strategies such as the provision of drinking water, housing, health and education services and to ensure good governance so that the intended beneficiaries were reached. In an increasingly globalized world, there was a need to improve policy coordination through new mechanisms and institutions. As his delegation had noted at Rio+20, the key pillars of a sustainable development strategy — economic, social and environmental — must be grounded in the ethical dimension of the human person. Therefore, indicators to measure progress in that regard should also be developed.

63. **Ms. Solomon** (Observer for the International Organization for Migration) said that migration, one of the world's oldest strategies for alleviating poverty, had long-term consequences that needed to be taken into account; it could be either a result of poor employment opportunities, particularly in rural communities, or an effective way to link people with jobs and reducing poverty.

64. The rising numbers of young people over the past few decades had created a dominant demographic reality that demanded urgent consideration, especially in the context of national development plans. Resolving the economic and social uncertainties that faced developing countries was vital to improving the productive capacity and living standards of the next generation; early investment in young people could prevent them from becoming trapped in situations of poverty and dependency. It should also be borne in mind that young migrants, in particular, contributed to development via remittances, social capital and knowledge-sharing across local, regional and national borders.

65. A similar process was taking place between rural and urban areas; migration could be a positive development if accompanied by strategic urban planning. In areas of high unemployment or environmental degradation, migration should not be prevented; to do so would impoverish populations and exacerbate the issues that had been the initial drivers of the migration.

66. It was vital to consider the rights of migrants in all discussions on full employment and decent work and to promote a proper understanding of the phenomenon in order to combat the growing trend towards stigmatization and xenophobia in destination countries, where migrants' rights, including with regard to work, were being undermined. Migrant labour, whether skilled or unskilled, was desirable and necessary if States were to recover from the current economic crisis and encourage economic growth. Policies should minimize the negative impacts of migration and maximize its benefits; they should allow people to migrate in order to improve their economic and social situation and ensure that those who did so enjoyed freedom, safety and full regard for their human rights.

67. **Mr. de Looz Karageorgiades** (Observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta) said that the eradication of poverty was the key to eliminating other scourges and remained his Order's central task; combating poverty and exclusion and affirming human dignity had been at the heart of its mission for almost 900 years.

68. His Order considered it a duty to serve the poor and disinherited and was implementing projects in more than 120 countries thanks to diplomatic relations with 104 States. That work would not be possible without some 13,000 knights and ladies, all unsalaried, who worked alongside 80,000 permanent volunteers and highly qualified paid medical professionals with the support of 59 national affiliates that stood ready to assist in their own countries and elsewhere on short notice and to provide the necessary budget for such operations. A majority of the Order's current projects operated under the aegis of its international arm, Malteser International. Belgium, Cameroon, Haiti, Lebanon and Pakistan were among the many countries where the Order was active.

Agenda item 131: Programme planning

69. The Chair said that at the present juncture, there were no matters under the agenda item that would require the Committee's attention. He therefore proposed that the item should remain open until the Committee finished its work in the event that there was a need for it to be seized of any relevant issues.

70. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.